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# ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH

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## Warning signs come down near Doe Run

By Chris Carroll  
Of The Post-Dispatch

The warning signs on the streets of **Herculaneum** came down on Thursday, about ten months after they were posted to warn residents of high lead levels.

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources posted the signs in September after officials found dust containing up to 30 percent lead on streets over which the Doe Run Co. hauled lead ore to its smelter in **Herculaneum**.

The discovery caused state and federal environmental officials to order Doe Run to speed up a cleanup plan that took effect last May. It also heightened the fears of residents that their young children might be vulnerable to lead poisoning, which can result in reduced intelligence and stunted growth. The signs warned residents not to walk on the streets until they had been cleaned. Although state environmental officials say lead dust on the streets remains a risk, DNR workers removed the signs as a result of an agreement in April between the state and Doe Run, which is based in Maryland Heights.

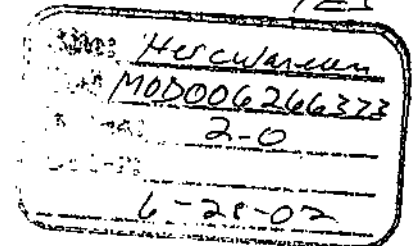
That agreement called for the company to buy 160 houses near the 110-year-old smelter in two phases. Several families with young children have already received offers from the company, and the remaining residents are eligible for buyouts in the next two years.

The agreement also required the warning signs to be removed once Doe Run's plan to safely transport and handle materials such as lead ore was approved by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

EPA approved Doe Run's plan on Monday.

The state will continue to monitor the cleanup activities in **Herculaneum**, said DNR spokeswoman Connie Patterson.

The signs caused anger among some city residents, who said they helped drive down house values and smeared the town's name.



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